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Public Examination

will be held at
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Commencing at 2-15.

Following an Address by Dr. N. CAPEK, of Prague, at 4 o'clock, the Visitor's Address will be delivered by the Rev. H. J. ROSSINGTON, M.A., B.D., on "Prophet and Parson in our 14th Century Literature" Chairman, J. Percy Taylor, Esq., F.A., J.P.
Tea at 5-30.
VALEDICTORY SERVICE at 7-30 in Cross Street Chapel, conducted by the Rev. John C. Ballantyne.
The attendance of all friends of the College is invited

For the Committee,

Edwin Oliver, Priestley Phillips } Hon. Secs.

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The Unitarian Monthly.

"One God, one law, one element, and one far-off divine event, to which the whole creation moves,"—TENNYSON.

The Month's Outlook.

For many of our readers the outlook for the month of July will very likely include holidays, and we wish them a happy, healthy, and memorable time. But speaking of holidays, I wonder how many of them are like some Unitarians I know who make every holiday a complete holiday from any sort of public worship. For my own part when on holiday I nearly always feel that God is real and wonderful more than at any other time; and *I cannot keep out of his way.* If I walk through a wooded valley by a tuneful stream I have to exult at the architecture of nature's cathedral, and I may sing a hymn out loud from sheer exuberance of spirits. If I pass a village church something impels me to drop in for a moment and remember the villagers who raised it where they might worship the same God; even though it may not attract me by its architecture or quaintness. And on Sunday I should not feel the day complete without joining the folk of the place where I happen to be, to give thanks for the things I am enjoying, and resolve to make the rest of the year the sort of life that such a holiday deserves to lead to.

Usually I have found myself in some place far from a Unitarian Church or Chapel, for we Unitarians are most numerous in the towns; but were I anywhere within reach of one of our own "places" you may be sure I should turn up there —probably with bare knees and a bicycle if there was a distance to go. My father was once refused admission to a Scottish kirk because he was not wearing the proper subfusc apparel with the requisite starched collar. But I wonder what Jesus would have said to men who turned the holiday-maker out of his Father's House because they were wearing holiday clothes! Don't we realise at last that all *times* are good for worshipping God, *especially holiday times*, and so all clothes are good for worshipping him in, especially working clothes at working times, and holiday clothes at holiday times? It is sad when some one says "I couldn't come to worship with you because I *hadn't time to change*!"

So I say to all ramblers, and cyclists, and motorists—look in at our country chapels, and plan your day so as to arrive in time for service. And even if you strike a dull preacher (which has been known to happen even in our chapels!) and feel little inspired, remember that the congregation there, whether large or small, is inspired to feel that *you* have chosen to join them in drawing near to the Lord of Life. And do not slink out without a word at the end, but even if nobody there seems bold enough to speak to you beyond a timid "Good-morning," see that you speak to the sidesmen or the minister, and say where you come from, and you'll soon find them showing off the place as if it were Westminster Abbey, and asking if you know so-and-so at home whose brother-in-law's niece is in charge of the Sunday School here—and so on!

"But where am I to find these churches?" says the conscientious holiday-maker, who once spent half an hour in Folkestone (like myself nine years ago) asking sundry policemen if there was a Unitarian Church in the town. You see, there wasn't one, though there ought to have been—but he might have spent quite as long in looking for the Unitarian Chapel (possibly called a "Presbyterian" or even a "General Baptist" Chapel, or simply a "Free Church") in some other town. The thing to do is to ask your Minister before you go away, in what places there *are* chapels, and he can tell you the proper name of the place of worship too.

So much for the country places—but don't forget the popular resorts at which there is no geographical excuse for missing a Unitarian service — Scarborough, Whitby, Great Yarmouth, Southend, Dover, Portsmouth, Newport (Isle of Wight), Bournemouth, Bridport, Torquay, Plymouth, Sidmouth, Chester, Wallasey, West Kirby, Southport, Blackpool, Lancaster (for Morecambe holiday-makers), Cheltenham, Cambridge, Warwick, Clifton, Bath and Buxton. Derbyshire ramblers from the Sheffield and Manchester districts might remember that if it is difficult to get to Great Hucklow on a Sunday in time for morning service at 11; there is evening service at Bradwell during the summer, and the

Thought for the Month.

If you can thoroughly enjoy the commonest things of life you need not wait for death to find your way to Heaven.

last train to Manchester from Hope Station is 8.27, and to Sheffield 8.55. And, Manchester ramblers, do not forget a place called Glossop! That's quite easy—trains home at 9.18, 10.30, and from Dinting at 8.28.

Bon voyage then to the holiday-makers, and may they prove that Unitarians are those who UNITE for Worship on Sunday.

The Education Bill and its Effects.

(BY THE REV. RICHARD LEE, M.A.)

The raising of the School Age Bill, whereby children will be kept at school a year longer, has aroused a certain amount of controversy over religious tests for teachers, the endowment of voluntary schools, the place of religion in State Schools and such like.

The Minister of Education, who has arrived at some sort of understanding with influential clerics and a few well-known Nonconformists, is somewhat relieved at the mildness of the opposition to his proposals.

The general public is not much interested. It imagines that Nonconformity is striving ineffectively to revive its ancient and stupid squabbles with the Anglican Church. Most persons interested in education believe that to get another year of schooling for the children is worth a good deal. And they are prepared to sacrifice something for this achievement.

No one, or very few, seem to realise that a compromise may have disastrous results from an educational point of view. In conceding the demands of the interested ecclesiastics, you may be jeopardizing the chances of the coming generation.

Vested interests are all clamouring for consideration. An Education Minister, at the peril of attacks from all quarters, feels he cannot do the just thing, but only the expedient thing. It may not be the thing he wishes to do, but the thing a minority Government can do in face of the difficult situation and the demands of those who have political power. In this brief article one can only deal with

(a) The Government Proposals.

(b) What they mean for Education.

(c) What might have been done.

THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS.

The main object of the new bill is not merely to keep children at school an extra year, but to improve education during the last four years of school life from 11 to 15. It is generally admitted that large classes, mixed grades in one class, and unsuitable buildings, are giving poor results.

New schools, or re-adapted old schools, have to be used for these senior classes, properly graded and adequately equipped in every school district so that every child in town or country will have the chance of higher education. In order to achieve these ends the Government propose:—

(a) to use the old voluntary schools where possible and to re-equip them at public expense.

(b) to make the appointment of all teachers in provided and non-provided schools the task of the Local Education Authority.

(c) to allow the managers of provided schools a veto, so that they may have sufficient teachers to teach their particular religion.

THE EFFECT OF THESE PROPOSALS.

In the abstract there seems nothing unfair in the proposals, especially if you allow a conscience clause to have free play in voluntary schools. It is the concrete situation which reveals the evil consequences.

(a) There are 15,000 head teacherships which will be closed to teachers except those of a particular religious brand. This will have ruinous educational results apart from the gross unfairness. When the Established Church represented one half of the nation, such a limitation of choice was not so unjust nor so harmful. It is very doubtful whether the Anglican sect represents ten per cent. of the nation. The reclassification of school children and the extra year at school will be nullified, unless there is freedom of choice in their teachers.

(b) The use of public money for reconditioning voluntary schools is dangerous, so long as they remain citadels of sectarianism. There are thousands of school areas where there is only one school, an annexe of the Established Church. If the sectarian bias could be removed, there would be little objection. But it is not removed one iota by the Bill with its changing of the time of the veto. As it is, there will be a great scramble to make out-of-date schools fit at public expense.

(c) Religion will not be helped by forced teaching at public expense. Sixty years experience of this mechanically taught religion of the feeble Biblical type in Council Schools and the mere drastic dogma in non-provided schools has not added much to the real religion of the nation. More definitely religious tests, as proposed under this Bill, will only bring religion into discredit.

THE CASE FOR THE VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS.

It is said that by wishing to make schools paid for by public money, open to the public, we are doing injustice to our Roman Catholic and Anglican friends. Before I suggest the only just way, let me deal with this objection. The Roman Catholics pay rates for Council Schools and pay large sums to build their own schools. The public, however, pays the salaries of teachers and the educational upkeep. In return for the cost of building schools, Anglicans and Roman Catholics get the religion taught in which they believe. Is this a fair deal? In my judgment, it is not.

There are millions in this country, yet a minority, who would like Anti-Militarist teaching taught in public schools for the common good. Suppose we could find the schools, would the State equip them and pay the salaries of the teachers? All that they should do would be to allow anti-militarist teachers to use their moral influence without systematized dogma in the nation's schools. There are more anti-Militarists in Britain than there are Catholics.

A Catholic teacher, or an Anglican, be it remembered, is open to take any head-teachership in any school in the kingdom. There are some things which money and ancient privilege should not be able to buy. One of them is the right to impose religious tests on more than half the head teachers in the country.

THE SOLUTION.

The solution is to take our dogmas out of the public schools and impose no tests whatever on public teachers. At certain hours, teachers who desired might be allowed to give religious instruction to those who wished to have it. The Rev. K. E. Parry puts the whole position better than I have seen anyone put it.

"Religious education is not the teaching of religious tenets, but the teaching of everything by religious men and women.

The only religion worth having cannot be tested. A religious test puts a premium on insincerity.

Let us train teachers not for the task of teaching religion but of teaching religiously.

A secular state could not easily destroy the influence of religious teachers."

If the Bill passes in its present form, it will be difficult to estimate whether it will do more harm to religion or to education.

"When Ye Pray."

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; so that ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."

—*Philippians i* 9-11.

Whatever we pray for, it must be that love may abound. To pray urgently for our friends is not just to hope that certain good things may happen to them, but to direct our thoughts outwards towards them in such a way that we are bound ourselves to do something for them as the days go by. Praying is not a method of speech, but a habit of mind, and the more that habit increases, and each deliberately turns his mind outwards to *others' needs*, the more surely will the "brotherhood of mankind" be transformed from an aspiration into something real. A selfish person can never pray. The better we are at praying, the less satisfied we shall be to let it stop with our friends. We must begin thinking of the strangers—and even of those stupid and silly people the very sight of whom is apt to annoy or even exasperate us. Can we catch ourselves at prayer actually wanting knowledge and discernment into the good points about them which can reconcile us to their incompatible temperament?

Unitarians do not usually offer their prayers "through" Christ; for we believe that God is our Father, more ready to help us than we to listen to him. What he would not wish to do for our *own sake* he could not be induced to do for any one else's sake. But Saint Paul's prayer quoted above is quite right in seeing that the fruits of righteousness are through Christ. Where will you find a better means of inspiring yourself with the sincerity, the knowledge, and discernment of the good in *ordinary men and women*, than in what you can read about Jesus? If you study the way by which he got the best out of human nature before you pray, then perhaps you may make "your manner of life worthy of the gospel of Christ."

O Heavenly Father whose best gift is a loving disposition, grant us patience to win that knowledge and discernment by which love breeds sympathy blossoming to friendship in the hearts of men, that suspicions and jealousies may wither in the sunshine of knowledge, and men's common needs in household, industry, and nation be pursued with friendly forbearance in unity of effort and the spirit of thy Son. Amen.

Flowers grow best in the gardens of those who love them most.—*John Ruskin.*

The Book Corner.

My Dear Reader,—

I suppose the correct approach to any writer is through a perusal of his works; but though for some years now I have been a keen admirer of the poems and essays of Francis Thompson, it was through reading Everett Meynell's biography of him and later two little books viz: "Francis Thompson Poet and Mystic" by Edward Thompson and "Francis Thompson and his Poetry" by T. H. Wright, that I came really to appreciate the beauty and value of the writings of this poet and seer. For this reason I am glad to welcome a book entitled "GUIDANCE FROM FRANCIS THOMPSON IN MATTERS OF FAITH" by John A. Hutton, D.D., which I came across the other day. It is published by Hodder and Stoughton at 5/-. In this I found a refreshing re-acquaintance with that unusual poet and unusual personalty. Also, it appeared to me, that this is just the book which many are seeking as an introduction to the somewhat difficult poetry of this great mystic. The poems of Francis Thompson tell of himself, of his sorrows and his hardships; yet running through the warp and woof of his work is that silver thread which tells of joy in the heart, even in the midst of his most dire distress. And it is because of this human touch that the peoms reach the hearts of men and women everywhere. In Dr. Hutton's book the life and writings of the mystic are so portrayed that we are compelled to recognise that Francis Thompson "belongs to the body of elected personalities whose poetry is no mere art, but the expression and biography of their souls." This book does not set out to be an exhaustive survey of the life and work of Francis Thompson, but whatever its object it succeeds in dipping into the treasure casket and bringing up many priceless gems. The genius of Thompson lies in the fact that his poems reflect so perfectly his personal experience and "lay hold upon delicate lights and shadows, exquisite moments of tension and moments equally exquisite of solution—delicate and exquisite things to which even ordinary folk are liable."

"To see things in their beauty is to see them in their truth" says Matthew Arnold, and in "TEMPLE BELLS," published by the Student Christian Movement (5/-), we are introduced to some of the beautiful religious literature of India. The aim of the editor of this book, A. J. Appasamy, M.A., D.Phil. is to seek to meet the need of those who are desirous of having at their disposal selections from the religious writings of India and also to make the book "in some measure enable us to understand the heart of the religious experience of non-Christian India."

There is an introductory chapter in which sketches of Indian authors and books are given; while ten delightful illustrations add to its imaginative appeal. To-day it is essential that we should seek to know the mind of India, and we cannot know India without knowing something about her religion for India is probably the most religious country in the world: so that all her political considerations are bound up with religion. The recent visit of Rabindranath Tagore to our country, will it is hoped, do much to create a better understanding between the peoples of east and west, and many selections from the writings are to be found in "Temple Bells." Its editor writes—"If the deeply religious impulses which lie behind the utterances of the sacred books of India are to be grasped by us, those books should be meditated upon."

A knowledge of the sacred writings compels respect and reverence for India; for we are led to appreciate her majestic traditions; her ancient culture and poetry, and the charm of the atmosphere and colour of this eastern land. I also recommend "THE PEOPLES AND PROBLEMS OF INDIA" (Home University Library). Especially the chapter on religions and two small booklets on Gandhi viz.: "MAHATMA GANDHI" His Mission and Message, with a preface by Fenner Brockway, published by G. S. Dara, Oxford at 1/- and "Gandhi and Free India" being two addresses by Rev. Walter Walsh, D.D. (6d.), to be had from the Free Religious Movement. London.

In any study of the message of Gandhi we feel that we are in contact with the essentials of Christianity, though this saint and teacher does not accept that name; thus proving that there are converging emotions and lines of thought in all the great religions. Christianity, however, is the form of religion which makes its appeal to most westerners, but in Llewelyn Powys, we meet one of its critics. In "THE PATHETIC FALLACY" he identifies Christianity with superstitious credalism, myth, magic and miracle acceptance. He confuses the fact that some Christian dogmas and rites have their origin in Paganism, with the living truth that Christianity bears witness to the principle of progress, and thus cannot be dogmatic in the sense that it retards development. He implies that science has made belief in a future life untenable: "Nobody is in a position to assert that there is any individual life after death. There exists no proof of this. . . The dead never come back to us." But Mr. Powys appears to overlook the fact that it would be equally true to say that nobody is in a position to deny the possibility. Christian hope is no longer based upon the belief in the physical resurrection of Christ; but here again Mr. Powys appears to have confused superstition with scientific faith. Such a book is stimulating, however, and the

arguments are forcibly put, but one wonders whether after all, it is not rather the Pagan and superstitious accretions in Christianity that Mr. Powys objects to and not the vital message of Christianity; for he writes: "Many generations will pass before Christianity is freed from the cloying dogmas that cling to it stifling the beautiful, incredible conceptions that have trembling life at their core." Does he really overlook the fact that Christianity *IS* this beautiful thing which he admits is at present stifled by misunderstanding and misinterpretation? "THE PATHETIC FALLACY" is published by Longmans at 5/-.

I must not close my letter to you without mentioning a very important booklet which has just been published by the Lindsey Press, viz: "THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND ITS STORY," by W. T. Bushrod, M.A. (6d.). This gives a brief history of the Sunday School Movement. One hundred and fifty years ago Robert Raikes opened a number of Sunday Schools in his native city of Gloucester. This movement met a real need, and spread rapidly, and we catch glimpses of its existence in various parts of the country. Wesley refers to the Sunday School in his Journal. At first it appears to have been a "serious educational venture" for secular instruction was very necessary; though the movement had a wonderful moral and religious effect. Out of it other societies grew, viz: The British and Foreign Bible Society; Friendly Societies and also the Sunday School Associations. There were other "advance guards of reform" in Italy and the Netherlands; while Luther, Knox, Baxter and Theophilus Lindsey and others gathered the children together for instruction. This booklet is full of useful information and it ends up on a note of appeal to present day workers.

One hundred and fifty years have passed," the old time cultivators have planted well . . . . . but their faith and courage, and virtue and vision, must live and act in and through us."

Yours ever,

ROMOLA.

National Unitarian & Free Christian Temperance Association

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON LICENSING.

The practically unanimous testimony to the great benefits accruing to the nation from the shorter hours of sale in, and the earlier closing at night, of public houses, given by important witnesses was one of the great outstanding facts during the early sittings of the commission.

Chairmen of Licensing Justices and Chief Constables from a number of cities, including London, Liverpol, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Plymouth, Bristol, Cardiff, etc., spoke of the steady decrease in convictions for drunkenness as being very largely due to the restrictions on the sale of drink imposed by the Act of 1921.

The Chairman of the London County Sessions, Sir Robert Wallace, testified to the great gains to public order and family welfare, due to the lessened facilities for drinking, and especially the 10 p.m. closing. He reminded the Commission that the closing hour over the whole of London was fixed by the Justices at 10 p.m., except in Westminster and part of Holborn (the part outside the City of London); these two central areas have 11 o'clock closing for public house bars, because they are regarded as the pleasure centre of London. It was a fact that 10 p.m. closing prevailed over twenty-four twenty-fifths of the whole population of London. Sir Robert spoke very strongly against the demand of the liquor trade for a later closing time. He referred to his twenty-three years' experience as chairman of the Licensing Authority of London and stressed the fact that under the earlier closing hour not only has drunkenness largely disappeared, but such crimes as the infliction of grievous bodily harm are now almost non-existent and the increase in the comfort of family life has been marvellous.

Two London magistrates reported that many publicans welcomed for themselves the hours of leisure from trading and acknowledged the more general sobriety resulting, particularly from earlier closing. And another magistrate from a district where the closing time is 11 p.m. stated that a large number of publicans would prefer to close at 10. This witness appeared on behalf of the London County Licensing Committee, and said that his fellow magistrates were all agreed that 10 p.m. closing has been of great benefit, and they have no intention of changing it.

Another London magistrate whose district has a population of 800,000 reported a great reduction of drunkenness, and among the factors creating sobriety he put the shortened morning hours, preventing the practice of former days of women spending the day in public houses. He added that the police in his district would be very sorry to see 10 o'clock closing altered to a later hour. The Superintendent of Police for a Division where later hours are allowed for "supper" said the privilege was abused in every hotel and restaurant in the west end.

A witness representing the Magistrates' Association of England and Wales, referring to licensing legislation and administration during the last 400 years, pointed out that it all proves conclusively the necessity and value of restrictions, the danger and ill results of free trade in drink or

undue facilities for obtaining licenses and laxity in administration. He recalled the fact that the period of England's greatest degradation, economically, socially and morally went hand in hand (a) with encouragement given by the State to the liquor trade, and (b) laxity in administering the law. The chief medical officer to the Ministry of Health and to the Board of Education, Sir George Newman, K.C.B., backed up this statement in his valuable evidence (so important that it would be a good thing if it could be brought to the notice of all public-spirited men and women; and this, indeed applies, more or less, to all the evidence) when he said: Whilst the general standard of living improved in the first few years of the 18th century, there was a serious set back between 1720 and 1750 during which period the deaths greatly exceeded the births. This has been attributed not to pestilence so much as to the social habits of the people, and particularly to alcoholic excess. An orgy of spirit drinking characterised the period. Gin was described as "the real grand destroyer."

Several witnesses stated that there was evidence of increased drinking on the part of women and girls; a larger number are less ashamed of being seen entering public houses than was the case in pre-war days. Surely it is not in this respect that they wish to be on an equality with men!

A director of a brewery company, with 700 to 800 tied houses, said the afternoon break was an unmixed boon to them all, and he agreed, in reply to a question, that the hours fixed by the Act of 1921 was a great blessing.

It is very evident that a very strong case has been made out for the retention, at least, of the present restrictions on the sale of intoxicants, and that any extension of public house hours would not be in the best interests of the nation generally or of those employed in the trade. But, notwithstanding this the brewers and distillers, to whom nearly all licensed premises belong (the publicans being merely their servants), are bringing all their enormous resources to bear in an effort to increase the hours of sale, alleging that they are doing so to meet a public demand. But one of their chief witnesses had to admit that no evidence could be produced of any such demand on the part of the general public. On this point the Clerk of the Justices of the Paddington and Tower Divisions (West End and East End of London respectively), who appeared as a witness, said that the wishes of the brewers and of a well organised but small minority must not be confused with the desires of the licensees (publicans), as a whole. He added: There has been absolutely no public demand whatever in Paddington or the Tower Division.

The fact of the matter is: the liquor traders are out to sell their products and this is, of course "good business" from their point of view. It is a case of vested interests against public interests, and it is up to the nation to protect itself from a trade which is undermining the physical, moral and spiritual life of the people.

—*E. F. Cowlin.*

OUR MINISTERS.

The Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A., has returned to York Street, Belfast, after his second absence in Switzerland, and was welcomed by his congregation and several fellow-ministers at a reception.

The retirement is announced after the next session at Manchester College, Oxford, of the Principal, Rev. L. P. Jacks, D.D., LL.D., D. Litt., and the Warden, Rev. H. Gow, M.A., D.D., who both attain the age of 70. The new Principal is to be the Rev. J. H. Weatherall, M.A., of Essex Church, Kensington; and the Rev. J. C. Flower, M.A., Ph.D., of Cambridge is to become Bursar and Senior Tutor.

The Rev. E. A. Smith, B.Sc., of Platt Chapel, Manchester, is to move to Wandsworth in October.

The Rev. Harold Rylett who has been in Hospital at Belfast celebrated his golden wedding on June 7th.

The Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.Sc., formerly Secretary of the B. and F.U.A., has accepted the pastorate of High Street Church, Lincoln.

The Rev. Joyce Daplyn has resigned the assistant pastorate of All Soul's Church, Golders Green, owing to ill-health.

OUR LAYFOLK.

Councillor Walter Duckworth has been appointed a J.P. for Heywood where he is a Sunday School Superintendent.

Mrs. John Lewis, of Pontypridd, has been presented with a silver sugar bowl in recognition of her services for many years as organist and as a Band of Hope worker.

A GREAT SOCIAL SERVICE.

We have received the 16th Annual Report of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, a quarto document of 106 pages, containing most instructive information upon the aid given by the Trust to various charitable social services. The present policy is to support experiments and pioneer schemes in social service, less likely to gain the financial backing of the public than old-established charities. Grants are thus made to the initial cost of new schemes. The County Libraries, Rural Development, and Playing Fields, encouragement of music and drama in newly developed areas, and a more comprehensive policy in the field of Adult Education are among the objects furthered by the Trust, or to be furthered during the next five years. Although grants are not made to places of Worship "for any purpose whatsoever," all Unitarians will recognise that the Trust is performing a religious work of the first importance, for we stand to-day for the conviction that there can be no true religion where there is no education, with the culture both of the mind and the body.

ROTHERHAM received about £62 on their Gift Day in connection with their Jubilee.

For the Children.

CONDUCTED BY REV. H. FISHER SHORT.

LEAF MOULD.

Afar in the forest where the wild ponies roam and the summer sunshine filters through the canopy of leaves overhead, making a rich and constantly varying carpet of light and shade over the forest glades and tracks, there one day took place a conversation between a beautiful stately beech tree and a low bramble-covered covert which extended some distance along the river bank as though making a protective barrier between the beech glade and the water which is sometimes swollen to a torrent by the winter rains. Autumn was approaching, and already the ground beneath the beech tree was overlaid by a thin smattering of fallen leaves, and the tree rustled its leaves anxiously whenever the wind passed over it, fearful for the day when its branches would be cold and bare.

"What is the use of it all?" sighed the beech tree. "What is the use of my taking such pains to put forth a multitude of fine, rich, juicy leaves every spring, when all there is to show for them in the autumn is nothing but a few handfuls of withered and decaying skeletons?"

The bramble laughed, and with a slightly superior toss of his hardy stems said a little pityingly:

"Yes, I suppose you do feel it rather badly. It's one of the penalties you pay for sending your branches so high and having such juicy leaves and leaf-stalks. For my part it doesn't worry me much. I am content with a lowly place in the world and my leaves and stems are so strong and so sheltered by you big chaps from the winter storms that I rarely have to part with any of my leaves, and even in the depth of winter when you are all bare and ugly I still retain some of my beauty and warmth."

The beech tree sighed again, and there was a sudden rustle and patter as a gust of wind caught its branches and sent a number of leaves dancing away down the glade.

"Ssh," said the wind, "what nonsense the fellow talks. You're surely not taking his boasting seriously, are you? Wait and listen, and some day you will know whose work is best, his or yours." And the wind passed on.

The bramble chuckled. "A lot he knows about it," he said scornfully. "Your work better than mine indeed! What a silly idea! Don't I bear fruit every year for man to eat? Why look! Here's a party of children coming this very minute. A lot of notice they'll take of you as long as there remain any juicy berries on my prickly stems!"

The beech tree made no reply. He did not understand what the wind had said, but he determined to watch and wait.

A few weeks later when the beech tree was stripped of its leaves and the bramble of its berries and the forest was dark and damp and bare, there came to the glade one day a lady and a boy. Each wore long rubber Wellington boots to keep the damp from their feet, and each carried a trowel and a large basket. Three-quarters of the bramble bush were by this time under water, and though it still retained a good many of its leaves they were draggled and useless and not particularly beautiful. But the lady and the boy were not looking for blackberries and without paying any attention to the bramble bush they made straight for the beech tree and without more ado began digging in the soft ground beneath its branches.

"Is this the right sort, mother?" asked the boy.

The lady stood a moment trowel in hand. First she looked down at the rich, soft brown leaf-mould at her feet. Then she looked up at the stately tree with its firm sweet bark and shapely branches. "Yes," she said, "this is the very best kind of all. I want my plants this year to be better than ever before. I want my house to be full of them all through the winter and spring months when the gardens are bare. And the very best thing in the world for making plants grow well is the rich, life-giving leaf-mould made by trees such as this one, fine healthy trees full of sap and with juicy green leaves."

Then the beech tree tossed its branches joyously. At last he understood what the wind had said. The bramble might give fruit that was a present joy to children and grown-ups, but he was soon forgotten and of no use once his berries were all gathered until the next autumn brought a fresh crop. But the beech tree lived for ever in the life of the plants that obtained food and strength from the mould made by his fallen leaves. And the finer and richer the leaves the finer and stronger and more beautiful would be the plants. So it was not in vain after all to make one's leaves of the very best, thought the beech tree to himself. After all they didn't become nothing but a few handfuls of withered skeletons with no further work to do. No, on the contrary, they became a life giving force for the generations which were to follow. Of course it was worth while to make them of the very best and as many of them as could possibly be managed since none would be wasted. And, of course, that wise old wind knew what he was talking about.

The beech tree glanced down at the bramble and then at the two bent figures now digging busily in the ground and filling their baskets with his leaf-mould—and was content. A.M.B.

NEXT MONTH—

A short Story by a young writer,

"THE COWARD."

What think ye of Christ ? II.

By the Rev. A. W. FOX, M.A.

Jesus of Nazareth being undoubtedly a historical personage, who lived at a particular time, uttered a unique message and gave his life for "the hope that was in him," what are we to think of him to-day, what picture of him can be shaped from the first three Gospels? First he was man, the son of Joseph and Mary, born as other children are born, most probably at Nazareth, where at least he was brought up by "his parents" and lived until the beginning of his ministry. It would seem probable or at least possible that Joseph, his father, died before that period, and that he stayed at home as eldest son to support his mother, until her other sons could take his place. During his boyhood and young manhood he must have heard the call of God in his soul; but he seems at first not to have recognised its full meaning, but to have found it at his baptism.

Like many another Galilean he sought the presence of the stern Baptist: but his soul was filled with a purer vision of God than that of John himself. He heard within his soul the words, "Thou art my son, this day I have begotten thee" and from that moment he was convinced of the Fatherhood of God. After a brief interval of solitude and filled with a deep sense of spiritual power he left his home and went forth to teach and preach. The first three Evangelists consistently represent him as working "mighty acts," or what have once been termed "miracles," while Peter, one of his earliest disciples in "Acts" says of him, "He went about doing good," words which may well include the recorded cures. That apostle further calls him "a *man* appointed by God" and adds that these "mighty works" were "done by God through him." In older days these cures were said to be impossible, though no man has the right to pronounce what is or what is not impossible in such matters. It is of no use to have recourse to natural law and such terms; for it is still possible that other discoveries may be made in that limited realm, which would even cover miracles.

To-day it is beginning to be recognised that at least some of the cures may have been performed by the natural force of an intensely spiritual man, in other words that mind has a distinct and growing power over matter. Every recorded miracle must then be examined separately in the search for historical truth. Many of the cures, notably those of the so called demoniacs, may well be accepted from what we know of somewhat similar happenings to-day. Others will be seen to have grown from parables and misunderstood sayings of Jesus. Others again have come from the loving exaggeration of the followers of the Master, such as are common in the lives of the saints of all ages and more than one religion. But the truth of the message does not depend upon such events whether historical or not. It has only to be judged by its own sublime merits to be recognised as true.

Opinions differ widely upon what is to follow, and the present writer can only present his own opinion. At first Jesus seems to have felt himself to be in the direct line of the prophets of his race. But as he felt the power growing within him he became convinced that he was the Messiah of his nation. They indeed expected a temporal monarch, while he thought of himself as a spiritual king, who could free his people from their bondage to the exact utterances of the law and make a great spiritual kingdom, which might spread from his own nation to the Gentiles. This would seem to be the meaning of his question to the Disciples at Caesarea Phillippi, and his thankfulness to Peter, when he said "Thou art the Christ." That confession indeed was followed by such a complete misunderstanding of what he himself meant by his Messiahship by the same Apostle, that he rebuked him with almost unwonted sterness. Certainly till he was brought before Pilate his Disciples believed that he was to be a great temporal king, such as they and the rest of their nation expected.

A careful reading of the Synoptics will show that his ministry was filled with a high and holy gladness, until the shadow of death hung over him on that last journey to Jerusalem. Before his arrival there, he had been conscious that a Messiahship such as he had in mind would gravely shock the authorities and the people in Jerusalem, and that they might well be so exasperated that they would bring about his death. So long as he was regarded as "the Prophet of Nazareth." he was gladly heard and crowds thronged around him. But when his further claim was presented, though he was betrayed and secretly led off to the High Priest and afterwards Pilate, the people did not rally to his support. As a prophet they would listen to him, as a spiritual Messiah they would have none of him. That he was condemned, crucified and rose from the dead certainly follows from the narratives. But what the resurrection was, and how it took place cannot be decided at this interval of time. The accounts do not agree with one another even in the places at which the visions of him are reported to have taken place. But what is certain is that his Disciples had some experience, which convinced them that the grave could not hold him and from a little panic-stricken company they became faithful missionaries in his name. That it was not a bodily resurrection seems hinted by Paul, when he ranks his "vision of the risen Lord" on his way to

Damascus as of equal value with those of the first Disciples after the crucifixion, and his strong insistence of a spiritual resurrection for mankind. "If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body," he wrote to the Corinthians in the notable chapter in which he is speaking in general terms of the resurrection. Whether some of the disciples had similar visions or not no one can tell, for there is no positive evidence of any such happening.

So much may be said for the outward events of the life of Jesus, though it is by no means all that could be said. Later a return will be made to salient features in his message, "who spake as never man spake."

What we can know about God

BY H. BODELL SMITH.

Study Course (18) in 13 short chapters—one for each week or Sunday in the quarter, for Sunday Class or Weeknight Discussion Circle.

(1)—HOW DO WE KNOW ANYTHING?

There are some people who say that we do not really know anything about God, and others who even assert that there is no God. They are confessedly either Agnostics or Atheists. It is important that we should know where we are on this great question, whether we are in doubt upon it or not, and why. For our real opinion upon it settles for us our outlook on life and on our future destiny.

So we will ask: How do we know anything? Surely it is by the action of the mind. You are quite certain that you see the flowers in the garden, the sunshine and the clouds, and that you have eyes with which to see, but the body without the mind could see nothing. If we were quite unconscious, though the eyes be open, they could not see. The five senses, touch, taste, sight, smell, and hearing, cannot be known except the mind be at work. That was just what Tennyson meant when he wrote—

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

To know anything depends upon the *understanding* by the mind. Merely to see with the eyes is not to know what it is that is seen. There must be examination, inquiry, experience, on which the mind reaches some intelligent conclusion.

Imagine a savage in some distant land far away from civilization, who had never seen nor heard anything about a clock or a watch, and suppose some traveller from civilization placed a watch in his hand. His first query would be,—What is it? How could he know it? Only by using his mind, by observation physical and mental, the physical directed by the mental, by experiment and investigation. A man sees a spark of light in the midnight sky. What is it? He concludes that it is a star. If he be an astronomer he examines it with the aid of a powerful telescope, watches its appearances on succeeding nights, and upon all the evidences resulting from his research he gets fuller knowledge of what it is.

The bodily senses merely supply evidence. A man sees a beautiful flower, admires its wonderful design and its gorgeous colours. He sees the insects sucking honey from its calyx and carrying away pollen from it to other flowers, and by continued observation notices its development into fruit. From these and other evidences he reaches conclusions which enable him to know not only what it is but why it is. Influenced by similar considerations Walt Whitman could say:—

I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four and each moment then,
In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own face in the glass.
I find letters from God dropped in the street, and every one is signed by God's name.

(2)—CAUSE AND EFFECT.

What does the word "God" signify in modern speech? It stands for the First Cause of all things; the great Reality and Creative Power; the Life SPIRIT of the whole Universe; which is "in all, through all, and over all." This creative and over-ruling Power is personified as the source and Giver of life, energy, and every kind of possibility. For convenience amongst any other reasons this Creator and Giver is spoken of in the masculine gender. To Him gratitude is rendered for all His gifts to mankind. Under a sense of dependence worship is rendered to Him. And the name "God" is adopted as the best and most expressive by which He can be known.

How then can we know that there is such a Being? We see life everywhere of which we are not the cause, which mankind cannot create (*Ex nihilo nihil fit*) "Out of nothing, nothing comes." There must be a cause which possesses power greater than any possessed by man. No living thing has ever created itself, nor can it re-produce itself by its own ability without power being delegated to it by that Universal Being which is the Source of all life. We know, therefore, that there is a Creator independent of all mankind, greater than all other living things.

Who made this Earth? Did it create itself? That could not be, for every created thing is an effect and the Earth cannot be both its cause and effect. But this world on which we live is only one among many planets in a solar system which may be but one amongst many other systems of planets. The whole universe of suns and stars and planets, of which our earth is amongst the smaller,—is so vast, including worlds so numerous that all the suns and stars and planets visible to human eyes with the aid of the most powerful telescopes, are only part of the whole. The distances between them are so great that a ray of light from many of them by which they become visible, takes many years to reach the earth travelling at the rate of 186,000 miles per second. stars from some of which it takes 2,700 years for their stars from some of us which it takes 2,700 years for their light to reach us. These facts give some idea of the vastness of the Universe of created worlds held together under the regulation and control of law and order subject to the rule and government of the Creator.

We CAN, therefore, know that there is a Creator who existed long before there were any human beings, because we know that there must be a cause for everything, who is greater than man, for out of nothing, nothing comes; and, therefore, we know that there is an over-ruling God.

(3)—THE WONDERS OF CREATION.

We can know much about God by the wonders of Creation. This is true of the vastness or extent of it and of every part of it, both the great and the little. That portion of it which is the abode of mankind—the Earth—is full of the marvellous and the wonderful. The mountains and valleys; the lakes, rivers, and streams of water; the forests and woodland scenery; the many

varieties of bird and insect life; the flowers of field and hedgerow, and their great variety of colours; all kinds of animals, small and great. None of these are created by man. Even a blade of grass cannot be created by human effort. A grassy lawn is not possible without the aid of a higher Power.

Is it not wonderful how the earth produces such varieties of fruits from the same soil, and different colours in the same flowers? It is marvellous that a tree can grow to a great height from a small seed. Look at the wing of a bird and note how the feathers are arranged! Listen to the exulting song of the lark, or the notes of the nightingale. Man has not created these. He cannot make a live daisy of the field. He can fly and do many wonderful things, but he cannot create the butterfly's wing, nor the eye of an eagle, nor that of the little housefly. They require a Master Intellect far greater. Lubbock has told us of anthills tenanted by thousands of industrious ants excavating chambers, forming tunnels, making roads, guarding their home, gathering food, feeding the young, tending their domestic animals—each one fulfilling its duties industriously and without confusion,—and says that it is difficult to deny to them the gift of reason. So much intelligence in creatures so very small. Do they not indicate a Creative mind greater than that of man?

Seneca, the Roman, asked: "Whence comes the breath which you draw; the blood by which your life is maintained? the meat by which your hunger is appeased? . . . . The True God has planted, not a few oxen, but all the herds on their pastures throughout the world, and furnished food to all the flocks; he has ordained the alternation of summer and winter . . . . he has invented so many arts and varieties of voice, so many notes to make music . . . . We have implanted in us the seeds of all ages, of all arts; and God our Master brings forth our intellects from obscurity."

And Cicero, earlier than Seneca, put the matter thus: "Imagine a race of beings whose whole life has been spent underground among comfortable and well-lighted habitations . . . . who have never ascended to the upper earth . . . . A time comes when . . . . power is given them—to stand forth in regions tenanted by man. On a sudden they survey earth and sky and ocean; they mark the vast magnitude of the clouds and the mighty rushing of the tempest; they gaze upon the sun and mark his immensity, his beauty, and the marvels of the power whereby he fashions the day, flooding with light the illimitable heavens; then when darkness overshadows the earth they behold the firmament decked and blazoned with constellations . . . . Surely after spectacles like these they would believe that there is a God, and that all these marvels are his handiwork."

(4)—THE METHOD OF CREATION.

If we are convinced by what we see of the wonders of Creation that there is an intelligent Power at work greater than any human power and one to which we can give the name "God"; which has created all mankind and on which all human beings have to depend,—we may well ask,—What is His method of Creation? Is it by sudden and catastrophic means that the earth and all the many planetary worlds in this vast Universe have been called into being, and all living creatures? That was believed to be so formerly as is seen in the Hebrew Scriptures in Genesis Chapters I. and II. But more observation and the researches of scientific students have long since proved that idea to be untrue. Geologists such as Sir Charles Lyell, Charles Darwin, and Alfred Russell Wallace, the great naturalist, have convinced all free seekers after Truth that the method of Creation has been gradual. That method is called *Evolution* which means unfolding or gradual development.

No simpler example of this method can be given than that described in one of the parables of Jesus: "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear" (Mark 4, 28), development by gradual growth one step or stage after another, by degrees, the latest growing out of its predecessor as from the seed in the ground by successive steps up to the climax of the fruit. This principle of gradualness is proved in the development of the earth from fire-mist cooling and consolidating and ultimately reaching the condition in which we now see it; and in the creation of the human body by the long process of development from a mere speck of protoplasm, out of which vegetation came; and the varieties of vegetable forms from the most simple, step by step, up to the most complex from which came the simplest kind of animal life, progressing through insect, bird, reptile, and all other varieties of animal up to that of the human frame.

But man has a soul. He is a Spirit dwelling in and clothed upon by his body of flesh. How has the soul been created? God's way is by evolution. His divine Spirit is everywhere, entering into all forms of life according to their power and capacity to take it in. There are many stages of development of bodily organisation between that of the earthworm and that of man with increasing capacity to receive and to hold the Spirit. So from little to more has the spiritual nature developed in animal forms with increasing power of thought, of mind, and will, as in the ants, in dogs, elephants, or horses, up to the soul as we experience it in mankind.

WORKING GIRLS' CLUBS.

We have received a letter signed by Lady Londonderry, the Lady Keane, and the heads of various Religious Denominations, asking for support for a National Appeal for £100,000 for the National Council of Girls' Clubs. £85,000 is to go to local Unions and Federations of Girls' Clubs to help them to start new clubs in necessitous and new housing areas, to found holiday centres, and expand the work of existing Clubs. The National Council represents over 4,000 girls' clubs representing a membership of 250,000 girls. The programme of the movement is up-to-date in promoting educational and recreational facilities It is stated that some clubs in depressed industrial districts are in danger of closing down through the closing of factories which have granted the use of premises for self-managed clubs. Any contributions should be sent to Miss A. Bourne, 6a, Blomfield Rd., London, W.9.

When the Chinese Emperor Nang-Fu went out to battle he swore to destroy his enemies. By skilful strategy he rounded them all up and took them prisoners. The leaders he treated well and detained at his court. The men he released and sent home. When his ministers remonstrated with him for violating his vow he replied "The common soldiers are no enemies of mine, for they do not hate me, they merely did what their officers commanded them. The officers and generals were my enemies, all of whom I have destroyed, for they are now my friends."

Recent Events.

CONGLETON.—Mr. Gordon Beverley, formerly lay-minister at Hunslet, Leeds, has been welcomed as lay-minister at Congleton.

CREWE held a Rose Queen Service on Whitsunday Evening, the queen being Miss Hilda Hatton, who was crowned by the Minister, the Rev. G. Pegler, B.A.

CREWKERNE have raised over £67 by a recent sale of work, and have welcomed the Rev. Thomas Graham as their Minister.

CROYDON.—The Dramatic Society has successfully produced Galsworthy's "Loyalties." The Sunday School at Dennett Hall has had to be closed after an existence of over forty years. The Wellesley Road Sunday School, of course, still continues.

DEWSBURY have held a two days' Japanese Fair which was opened by the Mayor. £110 was realised.

EAST CHESHIRE CHRISTIAN UNION held its annual meeting recently and the Rev. J. P. Rosling was appointed Secretary to succeed the Rev. C. E. Reed.

GLAMORGANSHIRE SUNDAY SCHOOLS held their first united Singing Festival on June 10th, at which 7 out of 13 schools were represented.

ILKESTON re-opened their church after re-decoration on May 31st. The visitors included a party of 16 from Pudsey, where the District Minister, Rev. J. A. Shaw, was formerly minister. Pudsey is over 80 miles away!

IPSWICH observed Animal Welfare Sunday on May 11th at which the children sang, among other items, a hymn specially composed by Miss M. A. McCubbin, who gave the address.

LIVERPOOL, MILL STREET.—The 94th annual meeting of the Liverpool Domestic Mission took place on May 27th, the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Liverpool (Mr. and Mrs. L. D. Holt) being present.

In moving the adoption of the Reports and Statement of Accounts, the Lord Mayor said he believed that the future of the Mission depended very largely upon having a man like Mr. Ballantyne at the head, and upon having people who would be loyal to him.

Mr. Stuart Deacon, Stipendiary Magistrate of Liverpool, said he believed with Dr. Hetherington in the doctrine of the presence of God in human life, and the presence of the divine showed itself in most unlikely places and unexpected ways. In the fulfilment of his duty as Stipendiary Magistrate, he had seen it manifested in the unwearying love of a wife for a brutal husband, charged with cruelly ill-treating her, and had seen its glow even in the affection of a criminal for an animal. The work of the Mission then being, first and foremost, reform and betterment of the individual, was thereby making a real economic and material saving to the state. He believed they were living to-day in one of the great epoch making periods of history. They had reached a great turning point in the national life and in their standard of political, economic, social, and (above all) religious values. It was indeed a great opportunity for optimism for all who were real searchers after the truth. Under such auspices as the Mission afforded, while there must be ever growing forces for good, it was only by concerted action that they would ultimately be ready for the attainment of the supreme goal; when the world would be filled with knowledge of God as the waters covered the sea. The Rev. J. C. Ballantyne, Mr. G. D. Foote and Mr. John Houghton (on behalf of the workers) characteristically responded.

LONDON, BELL STREET MISSION, has held its Spring Flower Service, and celebrated the Seventh Anniversary of the Rev. W. M. Long's ministry by special services on May 31st.

LONDON DISTRICT MISSIONARY SOCIETY has held its annual meeting at Rosslyn Hill, reporting the continued work of the three mission stations, though there is no longer a full-time missionary at Dingley Place. Mrs. Evelegh, the chairman, said the prospects for the future were not discouraging, in spite of a deficit at present, and emphasised the encouraging way in which the Mission people themselves are active in raising funds without depending purely on outside help.

MANCHESTER.—Young People's Day was held at BLACKLEY on May 31st, the services being carried out by twenty younger members of the chapel. Morning service was conducted by Miss Margaret Topping, and evening service by Miss Margaret Heywood. PENDLETON Church and School were closed on Whitsunday in view of the School Holiday Party taken to Great Hucklow Holiday Home, where not only 99 children spent the week along with the minister and eighteen teachers (some for part-time only), but several members of the congregation stayed at Barleycrofts and the Florence Nightingale Home—136 altogether visiting Hucklow. All attended the Old Chapel in the morning on Whitsunday, and an open-air service was held in Barleycrofts garden in the evening. At STAND on May 24th a service for Scouts and Wolf Cubs was held, when the Minister, Rev. W. Priestley Phillips, M.A., received his warrant as Group Scoutmaster of the the 4th Prestwich Troop, and A.S.M. warrants were presented to G. D. Wrigley and W. Barker by the District Commissioner, Mr. Randles Joynson, who gave the address.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME has celebrated the bi-centenary of Josiah Wedgwood, a member of the Old Meeting House, by special services on two Sundays, and a Pageant of its own representing the founding of the Old Meeting House and the work of the Wedgwood family in connection with it. The Pageant was written by Miss M. L. Beard, a member of the Chapel.

NEWCHURCH has received a further gift of a Bible from Mrs. Ormerod and Miss Nuttall, of Blackpool, in memory of their father and mother. The collections on Sunday School Anniversary Day, on May 25th, reached £208.

NORTH CHESHIRE SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION held their Arts and Crafts Exhibition at Mossley on May 10th, with 440 entries in nineteen classes of work. This exceeded all previous entries, and nearly 800 scholars and parents attended. The singing and dancing sections reached a high standard of performance, and the challenge shield was won by the Mossley School.

RAWTENSTALL.—The collections on the Sunday School Anniversary Day in May amounted to £110 17s.

SCOTTISH UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION at the annual meeting records good progress and increased membership in spite of financial difficulty.

STANNINGTON have held a sale of work in aid of a chapel restoration fund, for which £800 is needed in all.

SOUTH CHESHIRE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION held its annual meeting at Shrewsbury, with a conference on "Our Objective" introduced by Rev. H. J. Rossington.

ULSTER.—The Remonstrant Synod of Ulster celebrated its Centenary on the 25th of May at Dunmurry, at which the Rev. Alexander Gordon gave an address on the history of the Synod. Many could not get into the meeting house for the service.

WARWICK.—The Rev Ethel Kay has taken part in a newspaper discussion in the local press on "Why you should go to Church." She emphasises the need for sincerity in worship, and experiment in adapting methods of worship to present day needs.

CHURCH ANNIVERSARIES have been held at Acton, Blackley, Horsham, Southend, and Stockton.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ANNIVERSARIES have been held at Bermondsey, Bolton (Bank Street and Halliwell Road), Bristol, Chowbent, Cradley, Crewe, Denton, Hindley, Lancaster, Leicester (Narborough Rd.), Mottram, Newark, Newchurch, and Rawtenstall.

FELLOWSHIP OF YOUTH.—We have to report two ventures which we hope may succeed this year. The first is that we have undertaken to run a Chapel, long disused, in the little Derbyshire village of Flagg. Owing to the great kindness of Mrs. A. B. Woodhouse, of Manchester, we have become possessed of a property known as "The Green" in the village. This we hope will become a holiday and camping centre. The second is our Magazine, still in its infancy. We hope that it will succeed. If it does the F.O.Y. will possess a ready and complete means of presenting itself to the outside world.

At the Annual Meeting of the F.O.Y., Mr. H. Davies was elected as President, Miss M. Burroughs Hon. General Secretary. Mr. O. F. Jones Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Tayler Conference Secretary, Mr. G. W. Newberry Camp Secretary, Miss H. Fairfield International Secretary, and Miss G. E. Woodbridge Magazine Editor and Publications Secretary. G.E.W.

The General Assembly of Unitarian & Free Christian Churches

SECOND ANNUAL MEETINGS, JUNE 10th to 13th, 1930.

(By a Correspondent.)

The meetings this year were held in London in Whitweek, beginning at 11 a.m. on the Tuesday with the annual meeting of the Temperance Association, closely followed by meetings of the Sunday School Association, the Society for the Abolition of Vivisection, and the Men's League. The latter was packed so full of meat that there was no time left for the usual discussion. There were five speakers on "The Coming Revival." Mr. Walter Walsh, of Tenterden, told of a revival actually in progress at his church where in four months his congregations had increased from 3 or 4 in the morning and 9 or 10 in the evening, to 44 in the morning and 145 in the evening.

At 4 p.m. our President. Mrs. Sydney Martineau, received the delegates and welcomed the guests from other lands in her gracious manner. In the speeches that followed Dr. Capek, of Czechoslovakia said that the subject on which he had intended to speak had been dealth with so well in the June issue of the *Unitarian Monthly* by Mr. Vaclav Zizka in his article on "Free Religion in Czechoslovakia" that it left him little to say.

At 7.30 p.m., a crowded congregation attended the service at Rosslyn Hill Chapel, where Rev. C. E. Reed, of Dean Row and Styal conducted the devotions and Rev. H. J. Rossington, of Birmingham, preached an eloquent sermon comparing the religious situation of different times with the position that we find ourselves in to-day, and forecasting what may happen in the future.

The Annual Business Meeting opened very suitably on Wednesday morning with the hymn "God's Trumpet wakes the slumbering World" after which the Presidential address was delivered by Mrs. Sydney Martineau, on the subject of "Bondage." She told us that we were all under a self-imposed bondage to Duty, Truth, Liberty, and Justice.

In submitting the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts it was stated that subscriptions had been more than doubled, and a staff pension scheme had been inaugurated, also that the committee set up to draft a liturgy would shortly report. The President, Mrs. Martineau, and Treasurer, Lt.-Col. S. Chatfeild Clarke, were re-appointed.

Various resolutions and reports were disposed of with such celerity that we had an hour to spare, which was devoted to the discussion of an emergency resolution proposed by Rev. Fred Cottier, of Gorton, seconded by Rev. Stanley Mossop, of Sheffield, asking the Council to consider raising a large sum of money for general purposes, not a capital fund, but one for immediate furthering of our work. In the afternoon the resolution was carried in a form modified by discussion.

The afternoon session opened with a resolution on the Education Bill now before Parliament, protesting against building grants being given in aid of premises not owned by a public authority and against the imposition of religious tests on teachers employed by public authorities. The Rev. Herbert Barnes, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, put the case remarkably clearly, and the Rev. Rosalind Lee, M.A., seconded. The resolution was carried with few dissentients.

The Rev. Sidney Spencer, B.A., of Liverpool, and Rev. R. N. Cross, M.A., of Belfast, both gave very fine addresses on "The Church and Peace," which closed the afternoon session.

Then came meetings of the Fellowship of Youth on "Is the F.O.Y. worth while?" which resulted in the conclusion that it is, but needs to overhaul its organization and ideas; of the National Union of Lay Preachers, when the President, Mr. H. G. Chancellor gave a helpful address on "Prayer," and in the evening a Public Meeting was held.

Addresses were given on "What we mean by Religion," by Rev. F. A. Bullock (Bradford), Mr. G. G. Armstrong (Editor of the *Inquirer and Christian Life*), Rev. W. J. Carter, M.A. (Nantwich), and Rev. Dr. N. F. Capek (Praha). The meeting was impressive and inspiring.

Thursday morning found us deliberating on "The Basis of Church Membership" when Mr. Ronald P. Jones analysed the results of the questionnaire supplied by the Women's League, and gave some constructive suggestions, and time was not sufficient to allow all who wished to take part in the discussion before the Rev. Charles Peach (Great Hucklow) was to speak on "The Call of the Sunday School."

In the afternoon we had the strange event of a Bishop of the Church of England (Rt. Rev. A. A. David, D.D., of Liverpool) addressing a Unitarian audience in Essex Hall. In speaking on "The idea of God," Dr. David showed us how far his section of the Christian Church has advanced towards our position during the last few years.

Canon F. Lewis Donaldson, M.A., addressed the Social Service Union on "Religion, Civics, and Ethics," at 5.30 p.m., when there was standing room only for late comers.

In the evening an enjoyable Conversazione was held at the Hotel Victoria.

On looking back one is conscious of less enthusiasm than at last year's meeting in Manchester. We seemed to have settled down and become quite used to our new Assembly. At the meetings the "platform" was on the whole too much in evidence, and too little time was given to the "floor." After all it is from outside the inner circle that the fresh points of view arise, and the Assembly should be the place where delegates can express their views. But instead it had rather the appearance of a lecture room with the delegates as audience. If subjects are to be adequately discussed in a business-like manner strict time limits should be imposed on all speakers, and more items should be of immediate practical value to our Churches.

One of Our Canadian Churches.

The Church of Our Father, Ottawa.

By MARGARET T. HALKETT.

The Church of Our Father, Ottawa, is young as the life of churches in the old land is counted. It had its beginnings in the nineties, when a tiny group of men and women, who had glimpsed the great teachings of the liberal faith, gathered together with the aim of establishing a Unitarian Church. From the very first there was unity of purpose, and it was not long until public meetings were arranged, the first one taking place in a hall in January 1897, when a minister was sent by the American Unitarian Association.

It was truly pioneer work, and very many were the difficulties. Ottawa, the capital of our Dominion, was accustomed to orthodox ways of thinking, and the new movement met with no outside sympathy. But within there was a faith in the future, an enthusiasm, and an understanding comradeship that could not fail in attainment. From time to time various ministers were sent by the American Unitarian Association, and then came the Rev. Albert Walkley, who, born in Ottawa, had long dreamed of helping in the establishment of a Unitarian Church there. Under his leadership and inspiration was built the beautiful little stone Church, the Church of Our Father, which was dedicated on the 28th of October, 1900. Mr. Walkley will ever live in the hearts of those who knew and loved him as "a man greatly beloved."

The work of the Church has been varied, and also far reaching in its influence upon other Churches in the city. The Unity Club, whose programmes were contributed to by church members, many of whom were engaged in literary, artistic, and scientific work, was the model for the men's clubs which shortly followed in other Churches. It was remarked upon one occasion—"The Unitarians do things."

The Woman's Alliance has through the years done a beautiful work. The meetings, held once a month, have a 100% attendance. Business occupies the first part of the programme, and it is then that one realizes the scope of the women's interests, which go far beyond the immediate Church's needs and the calls of other city organisations. The Post-office Mission, quietly carried on for many years, has been the means of bringing men in far distant and sparsely settled parts of Canada into touch with Unitarianism. Following the business meeting is an address, when the speakers have presented many subjects—art, science, municipal affairs, travel and poetry. The tea hour at the close of the afternoon is a very happy time, and one feels the joyousness of the friendship which gathers this group of women into a whole. The first meeting on the year's programme is usually addressed by the Secretary from the headquarters at Boston, with which the Ottawa branch of the Alliance is associated.

The Boy Scouts Troop of the Church has under splendid leadership achieved on several occasions first place among the city troops. It is also remarkable for the denominations represented, including Roman Catholic. The Junior Alliance, the girls' organization, is marked by the same enthusiasm which is a characteristic of the Church.

The minister, the Rev. Norman S. Dowd, was a layman in the Church of Our Father, where he entered upon his ministry in 1927, upon completing his course at Meadville College, Chicago.

The Ottawa Church always welcomes a closer touch with the Churches in Great Britain, and it is ever a delight when we listen to one who comes to us from across the sea and realise anew that we all share the same spiritual longings and aspirations.

THE UNITY FELLOWSHIP.

Mr. W. E. Mayer writes from "Gwynfryn," Llanehair, Colwyn Bay, North Wales, that he thinks it is a splendid idea to let the isolated members of the Fellowship get into communication with each other, and he would like to hear of such friends to whom he could write. He goes on "I am only 19 years old, but I am very interested in the Unitarian Movement, though I have never been to one of the Chapels. At the end of this month I shall be going away on holiday for a fortnight, and hope to be able to visit a Unitarian Chapel." So we hope one or two members will write to him, and that perhaps he will already have picked up a friendly Unitarian correspondent on his holiday; (he wrote last month). When are we going to start a church in Colwyn Bay or Llandudno? We have no church in all North Wales! When the Unity Fellowship has brought enough North Wales Unitarians together and manufactured more to make a new church practical politics, it will have shown itself well worth while. How long is it to be? A.W.V.

DIARY OF FUTURE EVENTS.

Items are published in this column at a charge of 2/- per event, payable in advance for any number of insertions up to six. Secretaries of all church and school organisations are urged to send their dates to the EDITOR as early as possible.

SATURDAY. OCTOBER 4th, 1930.—Manchester District Women's League Rally, Houldsworth Hall, Manchester, afternoon.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16th, 1930.—Liverpool District Missionary Association Annual Autumnal Service, Ullet Road Church, Liverpool. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18th, 1930.—Longsight Free Christian Church, Manchester, Minister's Recognition Service, 4 p.m.

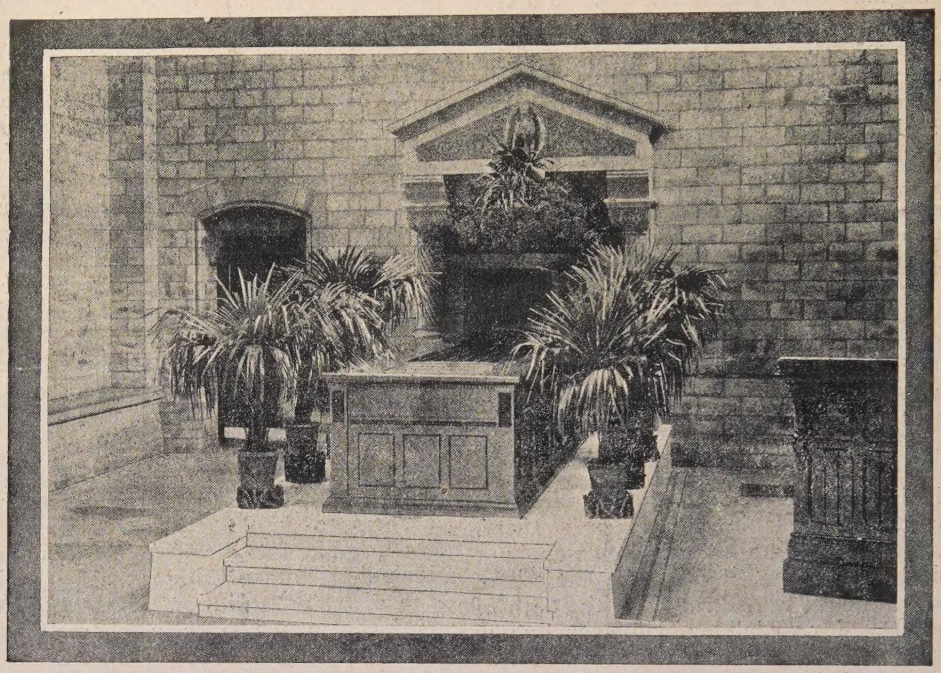
SATURDAY. NOVEMBER 15th, 1930.—Longsight Free Christian Church, Manchester, Sale of Work.

TORQUAY—HOTEL ARCADIA. Babbacombe Road Wellswood, Torquay. Fine position with sea views Convenient to everywhere. Garden and Garage, **Terms: 2½ Guineas.**

The Manchester Crematorium

BARLOW MOOR ROAD, CHORLTON-CUM-HARDY

Four Miles from Manchester. *Tram Route: No. 46 from Piccadilly.*



The Catafalque and entrance to Cremating Chamber.

CREMATION.

CREMATION is the only real protection of society against secret crime.

RESTORES, where desired, the ancient custom of inter-mural burial.

ENSURES immunity from latent disease germs.

MAY be adopted preparatory to burial.

AN argument against Cremation used by a writer to a Bristol paper was that graves in cemeteries will in time "afford open spaces for the public use"—therefore bury your dead!

THE most civilised and desirable method of disposing of the dead."—H. G. Wells.

INSTEAD of large and expensive areas of land small plots would serve the needs of a community for generations.

ONLY those who do not realise its horrors will continue the custom of earth-burial.

NOTHING but fair golden fire for an hour and a delicate white ash—at once the symbol of earth life and heavenly beauty."—Rev. R. H. Haweis.

Those who become members of the Cremation Society of England not only help the cause but receive a National Certificate giving the right to Cremation at any Crematorium in this Country. Annual Membership £1 1s. 0d. per annum; or Life Membership £5 5s 0d. All particulars may be had from Mr. Piggott, (address below); or from The Secretary, C.S.E., 23, Nottingham Place, London, W.1. Telegrams—"Crematorium Wesdo, London." Telephone—Welbeck 4168.

Visitors take a Circular Route No 46, "Southern Cemetery" Tramcar from Piccadilly right to the gates of the Crematorium. Admission to Crematorium, 3d. each. The Superintendent will explain everything.

The Secretary is willing to give LANTERN LECTURES on Cremation either in Manchester or elsewhere. Any further information and illustrated handbook may be had, post free, from Mr. ARTHUR E. PIGGOTT, Crematorium Offices, 37, YORK STREET, MANCHESTER

TELEPHONE—CITY 3896. TELEGRAMS—"INCINERATE, MANCHESTER.

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